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A BRITISH VIEW OF UN

by Montgomery Belgion

Only a few days after the newspapers here in London had reported a decision to ban all propaganda in English schools -- a decision primarily intended no doubt to check any preaching of Communism -- Mr. George Tomlinson, English Minister of Education, caused a circular to be sent to both State and private schools throughout the country. In it he invited a celebration of October 24, "United Nations Day", and expressed the hope that teachers would seize the opportunity of referring to the United Nations organization and its activities. It is true he was only doing what he had done in previous years, and very likely a similar celebration is urged annually in American schools. Nevertheless, who does not identify such sauce with propaganda must be a proper goose.

For propaganda is being carried on wherever there is the assumption that a subject does not admit of two opinions. The request that the virgin minds of school children should be indoctrinated regarding the merits of UN takes for granted the unalloyed beneficence of this new factor in world affairs, whereas the possibility ought to be allowed that the beneficence is questionable.

Although a mere five years old, UN is already the parent of a numerous progeny of councils, organizations, commissions, sub-commissions, committees and associations. As we sometimes do not see character written in a man's face till we have beheld his son, so a glance at the activities of two of these may quicken in us the realization that UN is actuated by presuppositions about the world which are illusory and fanciful. It but unites some nations in singing falsetto.

When one of the two offshoots, the International Bar Association, held a conference in London recently, the American, Colonel McClure, argued for the trial of war crimes by neutrally manned courts existing antecedently to the offenses alleged, and giving to the accused safeguards analogous to the Anglo-American rules of evidence. That sounds very fine. But the proposal has not the slightest chance of being put into practice. It is doomed to remain a pious wish for the same reason that the principles adopted for the trial at Nuremberg of the so-called "major war criminals" of Germany -- and notably the principle of indi-

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vidual responsibility for acts of State -- were not incorporated in the charter of the UN. The victors in a future war might be embarrassed.

In short, this creation of UN's, the International Bar Association, gave signs of dwelling in Cloud-Cuckoo Land.

II

The same may be said of the second and most lavishly-equipped of UN's subsidiaries, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which likes to be known familiarly as UNESCO. At the beginning of last July, an article against UNESCO appeared in the Italian weekly, Il Mondo, and sizzled like a branding-iron. It was by the venerable philosopher, Benedetto Croce. He disclosed that in 1947 UNESCO had invited his support in formulating a declaration of human rights. He had replied that the theory of natural human rights was untenable, both philosophically and historically, and that criticism had led to its being abandoned by scholars. The assertion of mere rights could not, he added, be shown to possess a moral character; for morality knows no rights which are not also duties. Moreover, since there were at present in the world two main contrasting and irreconcilable currents, universal agreement on such rights was impossible.

UNESCO took no notice of Croce's protest, and presently another offshoot of UN produced the much-trumpeted Declaration of Human Rights, the effect of which to date has been precisely nil. In the meanwhile, Croce was approached on behalf of UNESCO a second time. One of its members, a Chinese philosopher, asked him to help to call a "world congress of philosophers" which would assume the task of giving the world "an agreed philosophy" for all time. Of that proposal it is perhaps enough to mention that Croce was horrified.

III

It may be thought that, while expensive, the activities of UNESCO are at least harmless. But let us pass to this year. In The Times (London) of August 30 appeared a letter from Professor Gilbert Murray, survivor of an age in which the ill-fated League of Nations was taken seriously. He suggested that when the war in Korea was over, the problem would arise of "redeeming and reconciling" North Korea after "its imprisonment of many years in ignorance" and its long diet "of false propaganda", and declared that the solution of that problem ought to be entrusted to UNESCO. By a strange coincidence, two days before the letter appeared, the executive board of UNESCO in Paris unanimously resolved to support, "within the framework of its competence", the action of the United Nations in Korea, and to relieve the needs of the civilian

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population there "within the fields of education, science, and culture" by means of "emergency relief" and also, at an appropriate time, by "a reconstruction project".

No doubt the resolution looks highly altruistic. Yet the Indian Ambassador in Paris forthwith warned the board that by taking such action UNESCO ran the risk of being drawn into politics. The warning was applicable to far more than the plans for Korea. For the board had simultaneously resolved to use the resources of UNESCO for spreading throughout the world a particular political gospel -- the gospel, namely, that there is a positive good called "collective security" and that this good is best attained through UN; and yet, not only is it notorious that by no means all the parts of the world which have already heard that gospel accept it, and that even in Korea, where UN of late has been extremely active, as we know, opinion was divided on the subject, but also here was a body ostensibly formed to spread "education, science and culture" now deciding instead to spread propaganda for its parent.

Nor is this all. As the second resolution of the executive board of UNESCO was general, so there is, in addition to the danger mentioned by the Indian Ambassador in Paris, the further possibility that, even in "the fields of education, science and culture", the activities of UNESCO among primitive and poverty-stricken peoples may be as radically misdirected as those against which Croce has protested. Supposing UNESCO's "emergency relief" in Korea is restricted to the provision of material objects -- e.g. huts, desks, and blackboards for schools -- there can be no objection. But if Professor Gilbert Murray is to be relied upon, far more is intended in Korea. There is to be the attempt to indoctrinate minds.

Likewise, more generally, UNESCO has betrayed eager concern at the inability of masses of human beings to read and write. Now, it is of course true that masses of human beings in various parts of the world today lead precarious lives. It does not follow that simply learning to read and write would make them prosper. The indigent Persian peasant, for instance, may not know how to read, and yet he has a culture of his own and can recite long passages of famous poems. Why should he not be left to go on enjoying that culture, and why should he be changed into a passive newspaper reader and listener to the radio?

IV

When the executive board of UNESCO resolved to act in Korea, it was at the direct request of the Secretary-General of UN itself. So the goings-on of the International Bar Association and those of UNESCO together reflect faithfully the flaw at the heart of the parent body. For

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instance, to condemn "genocide" and to draw up a declaration of "human rights" is to do nothing towards establishing peace in the world. International disturbance and discord have never been due to the absence of solemn declarations, to a dearth of congresses, assemblies, and conferences, or to a languidness on the part of governments to denounce orally the alleged abuses of other governments.

The problems of the world are never to be solved by majority votes. The shibboleth of collective security is impotent in the face of overpopulation and the drive to a greater share of the fruits of the earth. The word "aggression" is but a soporific so long as the real causes of a war are concealed. UN's presuppositions about the world are illusory and fanciful.

UN is therefore equally mistaken in the notion it professes of its own nature. Presumably the celebration of United Nations Day in schools and the plans of UNESCO to turn itself into a propaganda agency for collective security through UN are alike inspired by the delusion that UN somehow has a noble mission. But UN can have no mission distinct from the missions of each of its members, for it is not supernational.

Not a single delegate to its council or assembly divests himself of his nationality at the door. Hence every delegate has the duty to put the interests of his own government first, and the general interest nowhere. Being thus no more than a disguised coalition of states, UN, like earlier coalitions, is dominated by its more powerful Members. Mr. Alistair Cooke let the cat out of the bag the other day when he cabled from New York to the Manchester Guardian: "The speed of a military decision has once again thrown on the United States a political decision it has almost no time to allow the United Nations to authorize."

If the decisions of the United Nations are taken in reality by the United States, or by any other one Power, and all the United Nations has then to do is to authorize those decisions, if allowed, any pretense that intervention in Korea was dictated by a lofty and noble mission rings hollow. To scrap the United Nations and have instead an open coalition would probably pay better in the end.

Montgomery Belgion, British author and lecturer, is best known in the U.S. for his book on the Nuremberg trials, Victor's Justice (Regnery, Chicago, 1949).

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VII, No. 43

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By Frank C. Hanighen October 25, 1950

HOOVER: The speech-of-the-week was without any doubt that of former President Hoover, on October 28, far transcending the utterances of Mr. Truman (of whose remarks we shall treat below). The Chief Executive droned platitudes; the former President sharply exploded words of common sense rarely heard these days. He reiterated that Western European countries had climbed back to greater production levels than before the war, yet showed no earnest of pulling their weight in the defense load, nor of any visible will to fight. "We should say", laid down the former President, "and at once, that we shall provide no more money until a definitely unified and sufficient European army is in sight. And further that ten American divisions will not be landed until then." Unless the governments across the Atlantic meet our terms, Mr. Hoover urged, "we had better quit talking and paying, and consider holding the Atlantic Ocean with Britain (if they wish) as one frontier, and the Pacific Ocean with an armed Japan, and other islands, as the other frontier". Our Elder Statesman thereby administered a stiff and long-needed dose of realism to our global planners and world idealists.

Another point about the Hoover speech: Immediately, observers here noted that from the Pentagon came a chorus of privately-uttered, but unstinted praise; and that the speech was given on the eve of the meeting of the military chiefs of North Atlantic Treaty nations (now going on in the nation's Capital). One should not conclude that Hoover acted as a spokesman for the U.S. military, but consultation with our military men did precede the speech. It is known that the former President has for some years given from his wealth of economic knowledge much advice to the armed services, and that the latter have reciprocated. And it is known that Hoover was on cordial terms with both Forrestal and Louis Johnson.

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CABINET SHIFTS? A question much discussed these days in the Capital: Will the Defense chiefs or will leftist functionaries (like Acheson) run our military policy? A rise in the military's power may be on the way, if one can believe rumors current here, namely: that after the election Marshall will yield his place to Robert A. Lovett, now the latter's Undersecretary. Lovett (as reported in this column last July) is regarded by well-informed observers as the "man of the General Staff". He is said to have accepted his present appointment only on condition that he would be promoted to Marshall's spot when the latter resigned. In short, if these reports have any substance, the future looks bright for the Defense chiefs. However, it is noticeable that, while many tongues repeat these forecasts, no one is prepared to bet that Truman, usually unpredictable in his cabinet appointments, will follow through as outlined above. And, it is added, the Left-wing advisers may yet throw a monkey wrench into the scheme.

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TRUMAN TALKS OF PEACE: Edna Lonigan comments -- There is something odd about Truman's constant references to "peace". They have a hollow ring, as if someone were giving him the lines to read and as if he hoped they might become true if only he repeated them often enough.

Peace is neither an abstraction, nor a vague feeling of good will. To ensure it is the hardest task governments ever have to tackle. Any contribution to it must be based on thinking of engineering-type precision, and the clearest understanding

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of the elements that make political friction. Obviously there is nothing in Mr. Truman's speeches, at San Francisco or at Lake Success, to suggest such a quality of thought.

The only apparent Administration policy to implement this peace talk is merely good old New Deal spending, but on a global scale and directed from a more protected position than in the good old New Deal days. American spenders, located in UN positions, suffer none of the restraints formerly imposed by Congress. Our officials engage in violent oratory against the USSR but that is for the groundlings. Is this puerile policy merely the result of traditional American ignorance of foreign affairs? No, there is involved a different, a truly sinister pattern.

We know that the object of the Cominform in America is to spread the idea of "peace" so as to intimidate or divide the American people. The obvious plan of the Cominform is to foment strikes and create "fronts" among the masses. But it should be helpful to recall Moscow's fondness for what might be called the "scissors" technique. For the Muscovites often set up two policies: two "blades" apparently moving in two different directions, but which can be worked together to catch the victim whichever way he moves.

If the strikes and the fronts are one blade of the scissors, what would the Politburo use for its second blade, to deceive Americans? What could be better than the White House itself? But how could it contrive to use this rostrum?

We know from William Z. Foster, Communist leader, that the Cominform is setting up its Popular Front in this country, and that its primary task is to create "peace" sentiment. We know that Popular Front rests on the PAC and its off-shoot, the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA). We know the lines of political control run from the party precincts (where the PAC thrives) right up to the White House. It would be no problem to feed Communist "peace" propaganda into that network so that it eventually reaches the President and his advisers. And so, the American people turning their backs to the Stockholm "peace" drive, would quite unknowingly be caught by the second blade, the Communist peace talks from their own leaders.

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BEHIND THE ELLIS ISLAND SHOW: The scenes on Ellis Island the past fortnight were more readily recognized for what they were and understood in Washington than in New York or elsewhere. Citizens out in the country were innocently indignant when they read of distinguished visitors from abroad being hustled into durance vile, or of husbands being cruelly separated from foreign-born wives. But in the nation's Capital, observers saw it all as just another example of a familiar phenomenon -- the Executive defying the Legislature and thwarting the will of the people. This time, however, the practice had a variation: the bureaucrats proceeded to maladminister the law in order to discredit it. As one observer put it, "the Department of Justice is enforcing the veto message of President Truman", referring to the President's long-winded veto of the McCarran anti-subversive measure.

Last week, Bertrand de Jouvenel in our European Supplement gave a vivid description of the arrogance of the French bureaucracy -- specifically, in the nationalized industries -- demonstrating how they are a law unto themselves. With similar impudence, the American bureaucrats showed their own strength in the past two weeks in New York harbor.

Senator Ferguson in a fine statement described this Executive action as enforcing the letter instead of the spirit of the law and pointed out that the statute provided the Attorney General with power to make exceptions and allow temporary landing of aliens whose past political record raised the question of totalitarian connections. Ferguson had helped draft the bill and sought to include in it every possible safeguard for civil liberties. As a matter of fact, the Michigan Senator's

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characteristic sense of impartiality led to the present imbroglio about visas. With the fairness for which he is noted, Ferguson insisted that the bill be designed to cover not only Communists but any other subversives as well. This spirit was ill rewarded by an Administration hell bent to nullify the will of Congress.

Those who have closely followed the subversive legislation in Congress say that members will discuss the matter when they return in November, and that the pivot of arguments may well be one word, "advocate". The law provides the barring of aliens who might conceivably -- considering their record -- "advocate" foreign ideologies and subversion of our form of government. Now if the entrant is a Communist, there is no doubt that he would actively work for subversion; that is why he is a Communist; that is his duty. But why should an Italian tenor, coming to the U.S. for a musical tour, be detained because twenty years ago (when he was ten years old) he had to drill in the Fascist Ballila organization? No reasonable interpretation of the intent of the law would suggest that the Italian would inevitably "advocate", or plead the case of the former Italian Fascist party. Even a child knows that the intent of the law was to catch Communists who might try to get into the United States. But that was not the intent of the Department of Justice, as it went to work under orders from the White House.

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LEFTISTS IN AGRICULTURE: A significant prairie fire has flared up in recent weeks in the state of Iowa -- with potentially strong repercussions both to the elections, not only in that state, but also in other parts of the Midwest. The story is worth telling, not only because of the election angle, but also because the strategy of those who applied the match points a constructive moral.

Our sources in Iowa and phone calls to agricultural leaders in various centers emphasize the importance of a new development unnoticed generally; that James G. Patton, President of the Left-wing National Farmers Union, is moving heaven and earth to oust the fellow traveller leadership of the Iowa branch of the F.U. This is the first time that Patton has taken such a step. Why? The answer is that he wishes to help Al Loveland, Democratic candidate for Senator, who is now waging a desperate but apparently losing battle against incumbent Republican Senator Bourke Hickenlooper. Loveland is a former Undersecretary of Agriculture and close friend of Secretary Brannan; and he started his campaign by backing the Brannan plan, although recently he has muted this line.

But the really hot friction point (which inspired President Patton's move) is this: Loveland has been associated with and backed by the Left-wing Farmers Union. Now, the National Farmers Union and its President Jim Patton have recently come under heavy fire by anti-Communists who have charged that it is infiltrated by Communists. The Iowa branch especially has drawn criticism because its fellow traveller leadership recently backed the notorious Communist Stockholm peace pledge. Hence, Patton who had played along with the fellow travellers in his organization has had to execute a sharp reversal. His action in Iowa stems from the growing feeling against Commies in the Farmers Union and from the precarious state of Loveland's election campaign. In short, it looks bad for Loveland, the Brannan Plan and for Commies in the Farmers Union. And repercussions from the Iowa situation may tip the scales for GOP candidates elsewhere in the rural Middle West.

But now to the moral: In our issue of September 13, we reported the speech of Senator Styles Bridges (R,N.H.) in which he attacked the Farmers Union for Communist influence in its midst. The long speech, well-documented and written, was largely ignored by the metropolitan press. But it did have an interested reception in the Midwest, and the sommersault of President Patton of the Farmers Union was one result. The Bridges speech has served as a stimulant to all those forces in agriculture which had long opposed the Communists. Exposure of Communism pays dividends.

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Book Events

Presidents Who Have Known Me, by George E. Allen. New York: Simon and Schuster. $3.00. Reviewed by Walter Trohan.

This book arms the flood of autobiographies of the Roosevelt-Truman era with a new terror. Humor is now added to leaven inside disclosures of government by caprice and by crony. Some may laugh at the wit, largely culled from bygone giants of Congress, but more sober minds may shudder at grisly overtones of the good time being had by leaders as almost 150 millions trembled. It is doubtful whether everyone can hold his sides laughing with Allen while he was hobnobbing with the great.

Rolypoly George was born in Mississippi and entered the Washington scene, after several tedious chapters of "early life" wit, as night manager of the Wardman Park Hotel in an era when hotels were not prying into the night life of the few guests they had. In this era, Mr. Allen tried to know one President, Herbert Hoover, by contributing $100 to the latter's campaign fund -- a fact the autobiography overlooks. In 1933, Allen seized the coattail of the late Senator Pat Harrison and was dragged into office as one of the three District of Columbia Commissioners. From this post he did a handspring into an executive position with a conservative insurance company and into various directorates interested in the Washington influence Allen was suspected of wielding. Allen tried to become better known by Franklin D. Roosevelt but had to be content with an outer fringe acquaintance.

With Mr. Truman he did better. He was in on the White House conference of Democratic leaders -- Allen having snared a national committee job -- that picked HST. Allen described this as a "conspiracy of the pure in heart", contending that the bosses of the nation's most notorious political machines rendered great selfless service in purging Henry Wallace, who might have proclaimed "the Soviet States of America". He terms Ed Pauley, oil man, "the Sir Galahad of the righteous hand". The same Mr. Pauley was later -- by coincidence, of course -- offered the post of Secretary of the Navy, but the nomination was withdrawn when the Senate took a Sir Modred view of Edward.

Allen's own appointment to the RFC affords him much humor. He quotes at length the various press comments characterizing his selection as the worst possible that could be made. Under Truman, Allen flourished as a White House jester. However, a fact which the autobiography brushes over is his search of stars to pull his political wagon. He threw in his lot with General Eisenhower in 1948 when things looked dark for the occupant of the White House. Allen offers Eisenhower to the Republicans in 1952 as a candidate "worthy of its Lincoln tradition". He says Ike turned down the nomination in 1948 (not mentioning that the nomination Ike was being urged to take by Chicago's Jake Arvey, California's James Roosevelt and other Democrats, was the Democratic nomination) for only one reason, "he didn't think it would be wise for the American people to pick a man they know only as a military leader". Allen reminds us Ike is now known as a college president.

Allen can jest with Pearl Harbor as being the only disaster big enough to overshadow his troubles and he can sigh with relief that the war came to America. It gave him a chance to go to Ireland on a Red Cross mission and attempt to drag Eire into the conflict. He proposed to build an airport with private money -- a novel idea for a New Dealer -- and, in effect, invite the Luftwaffe to attack it. This "top secret" plan, which he boasts was considered at the White House and by the military, ran into a snag because the British were thinking about their own post-war commercial air prospects and didn't want air fields in Ireland. Allen says he has since concluded the British were "wise to think about these post-war prospects during the war . . . some of our own post-war troubles might have been less severe had we done the same thing".

Out of the mouths of babes and jesters!

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